

Comments from past participants:

A pivotal time in having some understanding of how the Family Systems Theory can bring insights into being more mature in relationships.

Anne Parker, URC Elder, Leeds, West Yorkshire

Essential resource to every minister, should be compulsory!

Rev Chris Ferris, C of E Team Rector, High Barnet, London

A revelation about the impact of our personal histories on how we respond to other situations; and a great tool to begin to grow in maturity and to deal with anxiety.

Eva Price, Baptist Pastoral Worker, Plaistow, London

The course builds confidence in handling challenging relationships here and now, and provides lots of resources/ material for future ongoing work.

Rev Kate Mier, C of E Vicar and Area Dean, Warwick

It really helped me unlock some barriers to more effective ministry.

Rev Helen Warmington, URC Minister, Bromley, Kent

The course provides a wonderful opportunity to find a way into understanding family systems and the rich potential it offers to anyone in Christian leadership.

Rev Nigel Coles, Baptist Senior Regional Minister, Bristol

The course gave me a chance to engage with issues of leadership in a new and personal way.

Rev Ian Howarth, Methodist Minister, Surrey

An excellent introduction to Bowen theory and its relevance to leadership in the church. The beginning of a journey of discovery.

Very Rev Chris Potter, Dean of St Asaph Cathedral, Wales

This course genuinely helps to make me a more joyful, confident and effective leader

Lesley Crawley, C of E, Associate Priest, Farnham, Surrey

Bridge Builders

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Leading in Anxious Times

A Systems Approach to Leadership



15-16 October and 27-28 November 2018
Felden Lodge, Hemel Hempstead, HP3 0BL

Two overnight residentials

Led by the Bridge Builders team

This four-day training course, in two overnight residentials, is designed to enhance participants' capacity to offer mature leadership within their churches. It draws on the insights of Family Systems Theory developed by Murray Bowen, and is a successor to the well-received courses **Church Leadership & Family Systems**, and **Leading with Emotional Maturity**, which Bridge Builders offered for several years. Christian leaders are welcome to apply, regardless of whether they have attended any previous Bridge Builders course.

A way of facing challenges

Leading in Anxious Times provides a safe forum for processing challenging situations in ministry. There is a mixture of presentation, exploration of basic concepts, facilitated small group work, and opportunities for personal reflection in the light of new learning. The input includes a filmed presentation by Edwin Friedman, an engaging speaker who pioneered the application of Family Systems Theory to church life. In the first residential, group work focuses on understanding relationships in your own family of origin. After time to consolidate this work, the second residential focusses on relationships in your ministry context, giving each person feedback and coaching. Each day will open with prayer and worship. **The course is intensive; significant other commitments are best avoided during this time.**

Leading in Anxious Times: A Systems Approach to Leadership

A Way of Looking at Human Relationships

Family Systems Theory is a key element of the course content. This theory, pioneered by Dr Murray Bowen, holds that every family should be viewed as a discrete emotional unit, and that the system of relationships within a family is affected by two key factors: the level of anxiety within the system and the level of “differentiation” of family members. From these ideas, Bowen developed a framework for thinking about human relationships that has implications for all aspects of life. It has important resonances with Jesus’ teaching about worry, Jesus’ solid sense of who he was in relation others, and his ministry being rooted in his relationship with his Father.

The course also explores some of Edwin Friedman’s ideas on the challenges facing church leaders today. Friedman’s book, *Generation to Generation: Family Process in Church and Synagogue*, was the first to make Family Systems Theory accessible as a tool for understanding relationships in congregations. Its key insight is that families and congregations have much in common as relationship-systems. Friedman has pointed to a rising level of anxiety in society, and the impact it is having on families. This is likely to affect the church with increasing intensity in the years ahead. We can expect heightened pressures in congregations and increased demands upon leaders. It is therefore vital that leaders step back occasionally from the fray and learn to manage themselves in a calmer, more intentional way.

Presenters

The course will be led by **Liz Holdsworth** and **Sandra Cobbin**, who are Bridge Builders Training Partners.

Liz is Director of Mission and Development in the Anglican Diocese of Peterborough. She is an experienced adult educator, and in her current role develops and delivers training courses with a focus on leadership, and lay and ordained leaders working together.

Sandra is an independent trainer and consultant. She works with business and church leaders on management and leadership skills, mediation and ministerial review. She has recently co-led the Church of England’s initiative of Facilitated Conversations on Human Sexuality.

Meals and Accommodation

The course is residential, with accommodation provided overnight in single ensuite rooms, at the Felden Lodge Conference Centre, Hemel Hempstead, Herts, HP3 0BL (see www.feldenlodge.co.uk). Lunch and dinner is provided on the first day of each residential, and breakfast and lunch on the second day, with tea and cake to finish at 5pm.

Cost and Application

The full cost for the course is £625. **A special discounted rate of £525 is available if booking by 15 June 2018 and an early bird rate of £575 is available if booking by 23 July 2018.** If you are on a low income, a bursary may be available to help cover the cost of attending. Please see the [bursary information](#) page on our website or email us at bb@bbministries.org.uk. Where necessary, precedence is given to applicants sponsored by their church or organisation, and who may use the training for its benefit, or to enhance their own ministry.

A training manual is included in the fee.

Spaces are limited to a maximum of 16 in 2018, so do apply early as this course can be over-subscribed. To apply, please book online at:

<https://www.bbministries.org.uk/course/leading-in-anxious-times/>

The balance of the fee is due eight weeks before the start of the course (i.e. by 20 August 2018). Once accepted, the £100 deposit is a non-refundable. The full fee is owed if a place is cancelled within eight weeks of the course start date (i.e. from 20 August 2018 onwards).

Course Schedule:

Residential One

15 October arrive for coffee at 9am for 9:30am-1pm; 2pm – 5.30pm; 7.30pm-9pm

16 October 9am-1pm; 2pm-5pm

Residential Two

27 November arrive for coffee at 9am for 9:30am-1pm; 2pm – 5.30pm; 7.30pm-9pm.

28 November 9am-1pm; 2pm-5pm